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performing an image forming operation for confirming the image forming operation based on the image forming mode set via the first setting operation in accordance with an instruction for requesting execution of the trial image forming mode from a user,

wherein said control step controls to execute the trial image forming mode using image data read from an image memory by using a box function enabling the image data to be stored in the image memory irrespective of print execution of the image data and to read and execute the image data from the image memory if it is necessary to print the image data.

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated April 24, 2002 (Paper No. 6). Claims 1 to 66 are currently in the application, with Claims 8 to 66 having been newly added herein. Claims 1, 6 to 8, 17, 18, 31, 32, 34, 35, 43, 44, 51, 52, 57 and 62 to 66 are the independent claims. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 2 and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Applicant has carefully reviewed and amended to attend to the issues raised in the Office Action. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 112, second paragraph, rejection of Claims 2 and 4 are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,987,227 (Endo). Applicant has carefully considered the Examiner's remarks and the

applied reference and respectfully submits that the claims herein are patentably distinguishable over the applied reference for at least the following reasons.

Independent Claims 1, 6 and 7 concern the formation of an image that has been input and stored. The stored image is formed in accordance with an image forming mode that has been set for an image forming process. The image forming mode includes a plurality of processing conditions comprising a first processing condition for numeric data regarding a number of times image forming operations are performed and a second processing condition different from the first processing condition. A trial image forming mode can be set for an image forming process in accordance with the image forming mode. When the trial image forming mode is effective, the trial image forming mode temporarily halts the image forming process after a predetermined number of image forming operations are performed and enables the image forming mode to be reset. The image forming operations performed during the trial image forming mode are based on the second processing condition regardless of the numeric value of the first processing condition. The numeric data of the first processing condition for the image forming process to be performed after the trial image forming mode is released is controlled in accordance with a state of reset for the image forming mode in a halted state of the image forming apparatus. When the state of reset for the image forming mode is to reset the second processing condition, the numeric data of the first processing condition for the image forming process after the trial image forming mode is released is set as the numeric data of the first processing condition before the trial image forming mode was executed. When the state of the reset for the image forming mode is to reset the first processing condition, the numeric

data of the first processing condition for the image forming process after the trial image forming mode is released is not set as the numeric data of the first processing condition before the trial image forming mode was executed.

As described above, the numeric data related to the number of times the image forming operation is performed is controlled based on the reset state of the image forming mode. For example, when the second processing condition of the image forming mode is reset, the numeric data is set as it was before the trial image forming mode was executed. In this manner, the numeric data is controlled according to how the image forming mode is changed and the contents of the reset conditions. Accordingly, the number of times an image forming operation is performed can be accurately controlled depending on particular results of the trial image forming mode.

The applied reference is not understood to disclose the foregoing features of the present invention. In particular, the applied reference is not understood to disclose at least the feature of setting numeric data of a first processing condition related to a number of times an image forming operation is performed for an image forming process to be performed after a trial image forming mode is released in accordance with a state of reset for the image forming mode, where the numeric data is set as the numeric data of the first processing condition before the trial image forming mode was executed when the reset state for the image forming mode is to reset a second processing condition, and the numeric data is not set as the numeric data of the first processing condition before the trial image forming mode was executed when the reset state for the image forming mode is to reset the first processing condition.

Endo concerns an image forming apparatus in which a sample set of an original document is generated for a user. When the sample set is not acceptable to the user, the user can instruct the image forming apparatus to change how the copying is performed. As described at column 25, lines 45 to 63, of Endo, the number of output sets is changed depending on whether the sample set is accepted by the user. Specifically, when the user accepts the sample set, the number of output sets is reduced by one. However, Endo is not understood to disclose setting the number of output sets in accordance with a particular reset state of the image forming mode used to form the sets. Rather, Endo is understood to simply reduce the number of output sets by one if no changes are made and leaving the number of output sets the same if any change is made. Therefore, Endo is not understood to disclose at least the feature of setting numeric data of a first processing condition related to a number of times an image forming operation is performed for an image forming process to be performed after a trial image forming mode is released in accordance with a state of reset for the image forming mode, where the numeric data is set as the numeric data of the first processing condition before the trial image forming mode was executed when the reset state for the image forming mode is to reset a second processing condition, and the numeric data is not set as the numeric data of the first processing condition before the trial image forming mode was executed when the reset state for the image forming mode is to reset the first processing condition.

Therefore, independent Claims 1, 6 and 7 are believed to be allowable over the applied reference. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 102(a) rejection of Claims 1, 6 and 7 are respectfully requested.

New independent Claims 8 and 17 concern the formation of an image where a trial image forming mode, where a first image forming operation performs an image forming operation a predetermined number of times, is performed based on a second processing condition of a image forming mode set in a first setting operation, and a user is allowed to reset the image forming mode via a second setting operation after the first image forming operation is performed. A second image forming operation for performing an image forming operation a number of times corresponding to numeric data of a first processing condition of the image forming mode is performed after the first image forming operation when a reset of the image forming mode does not include a reset of the first processing condition, but is not performed when the image forming mode is not reset or the first processing condition is reset. As discussed above with respect to Claims 1, 6 and 7, Endo is not understood to control the number of output sets in accordance with a particular reset state of the image forming mode. Therefore, Endo is not understood to disclose the foregoing features of Claims 8 and 17, which are believed to be allowable over Endo.

New independent Claims 18, 31 and 62 concern performing an image forming operation based on an image forming mode set via a first setting operation by a user. A trial image forming mode for performing an image forming operation for confirming the image forming mode set in the first setting operation may be performed, but is controlled so as to prohibit it in accordance with a state of setting of the image forming mode in the first setting operation. New independent Claims 32, 34 and 63 concern controlling the allowance/prohibition of executing the trial image forming mode in accordance with a state of setting of a first processing condition and a second processing

condition. Endo is not understood to disclose controlling the forming of a sample set in accordance with a particular state of setting of a set image forming mode. Therefore, independent Claims 18, 31, 32, 32, 62 and 63 are also believed to be allowable over the applied references.

New independent Claims 35, 43 and 64 concern the execution of a trial image forming mode for confirming an image forming operation based on an image forming mode set in a first setting operation in accordance with an instruction for executing the trial image forming mode from a user, where a first display is executed on a display unit for the first setting operation and a second display is executed on the display unit for inputting the instruction from the user. Endo is not understood to disclose executing a first display for a first setting operation and a second display for inputting an instruction from a user on a display unit. Therefore, independent Claims 35, 43 and 64 are believed to be allowable over Endo.

New independent Claims 44, 51 and 65 concern performing a trial image forming mode to confirm an image forming operation based on an image forming mode set via a first setting operation and executing notification which enables the user to discriminate a first state where the trial image forming mode is not operating and a second state where the trial image forming mode is operating. Endo is not understood to disclose executing this type of notification. Therefore, independent Claims 44, 51 and 65 are believed to be allowable over Endo.

New independent Claims 52, 57 and 66 concern the execution of a trial image forming mode using image data read from an image memory using a box function

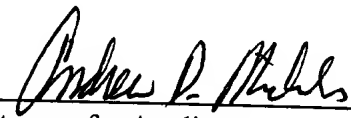
which enables the image data to be stored in the image memory irrespective of print execution of the image data and to read and execute the image data from the image memory. Endo is not understood to disclose the feature of a box function which enables the image data to be stored in an image memory irrespective of print execution of the image data. Therefore, independent Claims 52, 57 and 66 are believed to be allowable over Endo.

The other claims in the application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed to be allowable over the applied reference for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa,
California, office by telephone at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should be directed
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Respectfully submitted,



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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE TO CLAIMS

1. (Amended) An image forming apparatus comprising:

image input means[,] for [entering] inputting an image;

storage means[,] for storing [said] the image;

image forming means[,] for [reading said] forming the image [from] stored
in said storage means [and for forming said image]; and

control means[,] for [providing control for] controlling said image forming
means in accordance with [a] an image forming mode, which includes a plurality of
processing conditions comprising a first processing condition for numeric data regarding a
number of times image forming operations are performed by said image forming means and
a second processing condition different from the first processing condition, set for an image
[copying] forming process,

wherein a function is provided that can set a trial [copying] image forming
mode for an image forming process in accordance with the image forming mode, and can
[copy one set] halt the image forming process temporarily and enable the image forming
mode to be reset after a predetermined number of image forming operations are performed
based on the second processing condition and regardless of the numeric data of the first
processing condition, when [said] the trial [copying] image forming mode is effective, [and
that can thereafter temporarily halt said image forming process and enable a mode reset,]
and

wherein [for a copying operation performed] the numeric data of the first processing condition for the image forming process to be performed after [said] the trial [copying] image forming mode is released is controlled [, a numeral can be set to a predetermined value] in accordance with [a mode change effected during] a state of reset for the image forming mode in a halted state [existing immediately before the copying] of the image forming process,

wherein when the state of reset for the image forming mode is to reset the second processing condition, the numeric data of the first processing condition for the image forming process after the trial image forming mode is released is set as the numeric data of the first processing condition before the trial image forming mode was executed, and when the state of reset for the image forming mode is to reset the first processing condition, the numeric data of the first processing condition for the image forming process after the trial image forming mode is released is not set as the numeric data of the first processing condition before the trial image forming mode was executed.

2. (Amended) An image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein[,]
in an image forming process [copying operation] after [said trial copying] the trial image forming mode is released, when [a numeral] the numeric data of the first processing condition is changed in the temporarily halted state[immediately before copying], the image forming process [copying] is performed [by the] a number of times equivalent to [said numeral] the changed numeric data.

3. (Amended) An image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein[,] in an image forming process [copying operation] after [said trial copying] the trial image forming mode is released, when a processing condition [mode] other than [a numeral] the numeric data of the first processing condition is changed in the halted state[immediately before copying], the image forming process [copying] is performed a [by the] number of times equivalent to the [numeral] numeric data previously set.

4. (Amended) An image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein[,] in an image forming process [copying operation] after [said trial copying] the trial image forming mode is released, when [a numeral] the numeric data of the first processing condition is not changed in the halted state[immediately before copying], [said] the numeric data is decremented by one[,], and [copying] the image forming process is performed [by the] a number of times equivalent to [said numeral] the numeric data that is newly obtained.

5. (Amended) An image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein[,] in [said] the trial [copying] image forming mode, trial [copying] image forming is performed [always by] for only one set, and [said numeral] the numeric data of the first processing condition that is set is unchanged.

6. (Amended) An image forming method comprising the steps of:
[entering] inputting an image;

storing [said] the image;

[reading] forming [said] the stored image[and forming said image];

[providing] controlling formation of the stored [for said] image [forming method] in accordance with [a] an image forming mode, which includes a plurality of processing conditions comprising a first processing condition for numeric data regarding a number of times image forming operations are performed and a second processing condition different from the first processing condition, set for an image [copying] forming process; and

enabling setting of a trial [copying] image forming mode for an image forming process in accordance with the image forming mode, where the trial image forming mode can halt the image forming process temporarily and enable the image forming mode to be reset after a predetermined number of image forming operations are performed based on the second processing condition and regardless of the numeric data of the first processing condition. [copying of one set] when [said] the trial [copying] image forming mode is effective, [thereafter temporarily halting of said image forming process and enable a mode reset, and, for a copying operation performed after said trial copying mode is released, setting of a numeral to a predetermined value in accordance with a mode change effected during a halted state existing immediately before the copying],

wherein the numeric data of the first processing condition for the image forming process to be performed after the trial image forming mode is released is controlled in accordance with a state of reset for the image forming mode in a halted state of the image forming process.

wherein when the state of reset for the image forming mode is to reset the

second processing condition, the numeric data of the first processing condition for the image forming process after the trial image forming mode is released is set as the numeric data of the first processing condition before the trial image forming mode was executed, and when the state of reset for the image forming mode is to reset the first processing condition, the numeric data of the first processing condition for the image forming process after the trial image forming mode is released is not set as the numeric data of the first processing condition before the trial image forming mode was executed.

7. (Amended) A storage medium on which a program is stored to carry out an image forming method, [which comprises] the image forming method comprising the steps of:

[entering] inputting an image;

storing [said] the image;

[reading] forming [said] the stored image[and forming said image];

[providing] controlling formation of the stored [for said] image [forming method] in accordance with [a] an image forming mode, which includes a plurality of processing conditions comprising a first processing condition for numeric data regarding a number of times image forming operations are performed and a second processing condition different from the first processing condition, set for an image [copying] forming process; and

enabling setting of a trial [copying] image forming mode for an image forming process in accordance with the image forming mode, where the trial image forming mode can halt the image forming process temporarily and enable the image

forming mode to be reset after a predetermined number of image forming operations are performed based on the second processing condition and regardless of the numeric data of the first processing condition, [copying of one set] when [said] the trial [copying] image forming mode is effective, [thereafter temporarily halting of said image forming process and enable a mode reset, and, for a copying operation performed after said trial copying mode is released, setting of a numeral to a predetermined value in accordance with a mode change effected during a halted state existing immediately before the copying],

wherein the numeric data of the first processing condition for the image forming process to be performed after the trial image forming mode is released is controlled in accordance with a state of reset for the image forming mode in a halted state of the image forming process,

wherein when the state of reset for the image forming mode is to reset the second processing condition, the numeric data of the first processing condition for the image forming process after the trial image forming mode is released is set as the numeric data of the first processing condition before the trial image forming mode was executed, and when the state of reset for the image forming mode is to reset the first processing condition, the numeric data of the first processing condition for the image forming process after the trial image forming mode is released is not set as the numeric data of the first processing condition before the trial image forming mode was executed.